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MLPA Public Comments  
c/o The California Resources Agency  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Attn: Melissa Miller-Henson

Dear Members of the Blue Ribbon Task Force:

I would like to address the function of the Science Advisory Team (SAT). This was effectively discussed on pages 11-12. I would like to quote it here for reference to my other comments.

The Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) is charged with assisting the task force in developing a draft Master Plan Framework by reviewing and commenting on scientific papers, reviewing draft Master Plan documents, and addressing scientific issues presented by those documents. The SAT may provide information concerning habitat mapping, which habitats to include in an MPA network, habitat requirements of species, regional species lists, and potential socioeconomic impacts of proposed MPAs, and may assist in the evaluation of the effectiveness of existing MPAs. The SAT will review alternative MPA proposals developed by the Regional stakeholder groups and provide comment relative to the science-based requirements of the MLPA.

With this well-worded charge in mind, we now turn to the Science Advisory Team Advice on MPA Network Design (pages 25-28). The SAT is acknowledged as having more expertise in certain fields than the task force. Its duty therefore is to provide guidance to the task force by providing **findings** based on the best available science – not by making policy. For instance, instead of promoting one level of protection as this section currently advocates, the SAT should offer alternative levels of protection and the advantages and risks associated with each. While a high level of protection is desirable, there is a related high economic cost which must be considered before a decision is made. The findings also provide a means of evaluating decisions should better science become available (i.e. the reliance placed on a factor can be re-evaluated). In addition, findings provide justification for action should it be challenged in court. At the same time, United Anglers of Southern California requests that all findings be signed by each member of the SAT. If a member of the SAT does not agree with the findings, he should submit a dissent to be included with the majority's finding.

The SAT's duty is to outline and discuss available science, not necessarily come to conclusions. It should provide the information for stakeholders to understand what issues were considered in the design of MPAs and for the task force to make informed policy decisions.

Sincerely,

April A. Wakeman  
Attorney-at-Law